



EFSEC

News Release

Washington State
Energy Facility Site Evaluation Council
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EFSEC declines to change recommendation on Sumas 2 power plant, offers opportunity to file revised application

The Energy Facility Site Evaluation Council today decided not to change its recommendation against siting the 660-megawatt power plant proposed to be built in Sumas, Washington. However, the council offered Sumas Energy 2, Inc. (SE2), the opportunity to file a revised proposal. A new proposal such as suggested in SE2's motion for reconsideration might remove many of the concerns that led the council to recommend denial of the project.

In today's Order the council gave SE2 until April 27, 2001, to withdraw its application and file a "statement of intent" to file a revised application, or have the council forward its original recommendation to the Governor.

The power plant, as described in SE2's January 2000 application, would have been a natural gas-fired electric generation facility, with diesel fuel as back up. A 230 kV electric transmission line and a natural gas pipeline would have run to the Canadian border.

On February 16, 2001, in Bellingham, Washington, the council voted unanimously to recommend to the Governor that the proposed project not be sited in Sumas. The Council gave a number of reasons for its recommendation, including concerns over impacts to air and water quality, the lack of demonstrated energy benefits to the region, other environmental and social impacts, and significant local opposition.

"Before the council sent its recommendation to the Governor, SE2 asked it to reconsider its decision," said Deborah Ross, Council chair. "SE2 has proposed to make a number of significant changes to its project." These include dropping the use of diesel as a back-up fuel, agreeing to offset some of the greenhouse gas and air quality impacts resulting from project emissions, and agreeing to regional long-term contracts for the sale of energy, she added.

Responding to SE2's request in the motion to reconsider its earlier decision, the council said that EFSEC laws and regulations do not allow it to unilaterally adopt the changes that SE2 proposes. The council must provide an opportunity for the parties to the adjudicative proceeding and the public to be heard. But the Council also found that the changes SE2 proposes to the project appear at first blush to address many, if not all, of the factors that led the council to make its initial recommendation.

SE2 has until April 27, 2001, to withdraw its application and notify the council that it intends to file a revised application. The new application could be given an abridged schedule for hearing, by including some of the testimony and evidence developed in the previous case.

A copy of Council Order No. 757 - Order on Applicant's Motion for Reconsideration can be found on EFSEC's web site at www.efsec.wa.gov.

The Energy Facility Site Evaluation Council, or EFSEC, is the state agency charged with making a recommendation to the governor as to whether a new energy facility should be sited in Washington State. The Council is made up of a citizen chair appointed by the governor and representatives from 9 state agencies. During a review of applications for proposed projects, representatives from affected local governments also sit as voting members on the Council. Upon completion of its review, EFSEC submits its recommendation to the Governor for consideration of approval or denial of the application to construct and operate the facility.